RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Analysis of phygital retailing towards Omni-channel approach in apparel sector

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INTRODUCTION

With the emergence of technologies, there is a significant change in customer's behaviour towards shopping and retailer's strategy to create a seamless shopping experience for them. Customers are more demanding in this digital era as they are more knowledgeable and empowered by technology. Thus, a retailer needs to change their conventional strategy of doing business. The change in customer behaviour is a big reason of retail industry transition. Multiple channels such as website, mobile, physical store and catalog have been used by the customer for buying the products. Due to digitalization, customers become more tech-savvy due to which this industry has turned into the next stage with the more advanced concept called Omni-channel. The concept of Omni-channel was introduced in the year 2010. Omni-channel has been considered as a promising solution for all the challenges and drawbacks of multiple channel sales. This concept provides the idea of customer centricity and centralized data management.

1.1 Omni-channel retailing

Transition from Single-channel to Multi-channel

Single-channel is the conventional retail model which focuses on single channel only. In single channel approach, retailers own only brick- and-mortar stores (offline) or web-stores (online). Initially, this model achieved a lot of accomplishment as this channel focused on one channel which minimizes all expenses as well as driving sales growth. However, one channel sale encountered many limitations as the age of digital came and many more sale channels arose. Customers expect a more convenient experience and use multiple channels as well as multiple devices for shopping. As a result, a single-channel strategy is no longer enough to attract increasingly demanding customers. That put retailers under a pressure of reshaping their business models for fear of lagging behind in the sale-growth race. At that moment, multi-channel arose as a new retailing approach that could take advantage of the digital age to satisfy customers with whatever channels they choose. This business model quickly dominated the retail industry.

Transition from Multi-channel to Omni-channel

Multi-channel is a retail model born with the digital revolution. Retailers adapting this strategy offer customers a choice to purchase products via both online and offline channels. Therefore, it is more flexible and convenient for consumers to purchase goods or services, which helps dramatically boost sale. Another advantage of this strategy is that it brings about a 24-hour access to customer which helps build brand loyalty. Retailers also benefit from multi-channel by improving analytics to understand consumer behaviours since building a personalized customer experience is a must in the digital age. However, many questions had risen along with the expanding of multi-channel, including how to bring customers a seamless experience across channels and which could help smoothly operate the internal process. As customers became more demanding, fulfilling their expectation went beyond retailer's infrastructural development.

Creating a seamless experience over different channels, while at the same time ensuring the accuracy and efficiency, was almost impossible. For example, retailers found it hard to manage purchases from various channels or struggled with order fulfilment and speedy delivery. Besides, customer service was also a big concern since retailers communicated with shoppers in multiple channels and became confused with data synchronization in separate systems. More channels involve in the distribution system require more available warehouses with higher inventory accuracy, whereas multi-channel strategy lacked inventory visibility and an efficient management over various warehouses. This caused a supply-demand gap that was almost impossible to be closed without a centralized management system. Furthermore, this business model also caused difficulties in measurement analysis when collecting data from separate channels, leading to an inefficient strategy. As the retail landscape continued to change and multi-channel seemed to reach its limitation, the retail world moved forward a new phase called Omni- channel. This retail model optimizes multiple sales channels while at the same time bringing about a high level of integration among them.

Omni-channel is an advanced concept

Omni-channel is the retail model in which all existing channels become completely integrated to offer customers a seamless shopping experience. This retail strategy is empowered by centralized data management which improves the distinctions among

channels, both physical and online. As a result, customers can simultaneously use different channels in their shopping process, starting their search at a channel and finish the purchase in another one. They are given chances to create their own preferable shopping routines which seem to be more attractive to a new generation of consumers in the 21st century. Omni-channel approach can be adopted simultaneously in sales channels, inventory management, and marketing strategy. This concept seems to be an extension of multi-channel; the two strategies are very distinct and separate retail models.

Multi-channel	**Omni-channel**
Retailers adopt as many channels as possible but manage them separately	Omni-channel provides retailers a wholly centralized data management towards a synchronization of existing channels
Multi-channel strategy is launched for the sake of retailers, so that they can sell as many products as possible	Customer centricity is the main core of Omni-channel. It means that retailers must "think like customers think" to optimize customer experience

Omni-channel businesses target at long-term shoppers, which means that they focus more on improving customer profitability instead of only sales growth. Retail is turning into a new world of the Omni-channel culture featured with a new generation of Omni-shoppers and Omni-retailers.

1.1.1 Omni-channel Story

1. **The Nike Story**

Nike, a major player in the field of sportswear and sports goods, the company has one of the most well pronounced Omni-channel initiatives.

- The company has taken steps to make the consumer aware of the technical aspects of the product in the offline as well as online platform. In the online space, Nike has taken help of technology to educate the consumer about the technical aspects of a product.
- Nike has come up with consumer-friendly initiatives like the 30-day money-back guarantee programme. As per this policy, the company lets the consumer use a

product, after it has been bought, for 30 days and is willing to take the product back and give a Nike credit to an unsatisfied consumer.

"Nike and Omni- channel is a win-win relationship for both customers and brands"

2. Macy's Strategy

This US-headquartered retailer also came up with its Omni-channel strategy to engage the consumer.

- Macy's started initiatives like the 'buy online, pick up in store' programme. This helped bring customers into the company's stores.
- The company use Tyco Retail Solutions inventory viability platform to access its entire inventory. This way the company is able to use its brick-and-mortar stores to support online orders.

3. Bestseller India

Bestseller is a European fashion company, with a global range of more than 15 individual fashion brands. In India, Bestseller products are marketed and sold under brands such as Jack & Jones, Vero Moda and Only.

- The partnership with Tata CLiQ is one of their strategic alliances in the Omni-channel approach, their inventory is live on the Tata CLiQ website, and the customers have an option of either getting the products delivered within six hours to their home or order online and collect the product from the store.
- The focus is to be as close to the consumers as possible; they are also collaborating with Myntra to make their inventory live on their website.

4. Shoppers Stop

In 2015, Shoppers Stop made a strategic shift in this direction with its Omni-channel foray that aims to redefine the customer shopping experience. Shoppers Stop is one of the first Indian retailers to adopt the Omni-channel approach, which is still at a very nascent stage in India. Currently, it is a work in progress with a number of strategies to achieve the kind of integration required for an Omni-channel experience, two of the most important steps in this direction are explained below:

a) Uniformity across all channels: It is important to provide the customer with the same kind of brand assortment, quality of brands and price points. They are selling similar number of stock keeping units (SKUs) online as is available in the stores. They do not create a separate line to be sold online. The concept of 'curated assortment' applies to their online stock as well.
b) Integrating customers, orders and inventory management: They are keeping only one view of customers, orders and inventory. Each of these can be achieved by different technologies. They have invested heavily to procure the right software to implement the Omni-channel strategy. For e.g. the SAS model for customer support, JDA-WMS for inventory management, and OMS for orders. They are working on integration of these factors.

Other than procuring the right kind of technology to integrate customer management, order management and inventory management, they also redesigned and launched a new website, which is compatible across all devices including laptops, mobiles, iPads and tablets.

- Another initiative towards incorporating digital technology within the brick-and-mortar store was the Magic Mirror. It was a first-of-its-kind in a department store in India; it enabled customers to swipe through various products without having physically to 'try on' the desired products. To enhance its customer outreach, Shoppers Stop has also entered into strategic alliances with a number of online market places like Snapdeal, Amazon, Jabong and Flipkart.
- Another initiative in the Omni-channel direction is capturing the customer preferences based on the past shopping history. They also offer multiple payment options, e.g. using the freecharge wallet in all its stores. Their intention is to offer the same experience to the customer be it online or in the store.

1.2 Retailer's interest towards Omni-channel approach

Gugnani, A. and Brahma, P. K. (2016) stated that many fashion brands and retailers operating in India have started adopting Omni-channel retailing. The physical store retailers have also started considering all possible channels of retailing. Most of them have started moving closer to Omni-channel experience. However, it might take a few years to provide true Omni-

channel fashion retailing in India, where the consumer would become the fulcrum point of the retail channels and can move seamlessly from one channel to another without any hassle.

Aberdeen Group (2013) and Demery (2013) found that retailers with strong Omni-channel customer service strategies have a 91 percent better customer retention than those with weaker omni-channel strategies.

1.3 Consumer attitude towards Omni-channel approach

Omni-channel aims to coordinate the fragmented service processes and technologies in various channels to deliver a consistent and integrated cross-channel experience for customers. Omni-channel shoppers spend 15-30 percent more than traditional shoppers (DHL, 2015; Krueger, 2015). Ishfaq et al. (2016) stated that empowered and well-informed Omni-channel shoppers move across channels and expect a seamless customer experience.

1.3.1 Perceived fluency

Reber et al. (2004) stated that the concept of fluency originates from information processing research, and refers to the ease of information processing. Cassab et al. (2006, Im et al. (2010) & Mosteller et al. (2014) stated that fluency is widely regarded as a key factor that shapes user's trust, positive effect, perceived cognition effort, and ultimately, the choice outcome judgements in online shopping context. Majrashi & Hamilton (2015) deconstructed perceived fluency into five dimensions, including task, content, interaction, cognition and feeling fluency. Task fluency refers to the extent to which customers feel smooth when migrating tasks from one channel to another. Content fluency refers to the extent to which, after channel transition, customer experience the continuity of reading or exploring the service content and information. Interaction fluency refers to the extent to which the cross-channel service interactions are continuous and interconnected. Cognition fluency represents that customer's judgement about services remains unchanged after channel transition, while feeling fluency suggests that customers have a same level of feeling towards the services after channel transition.

1.3.2 Omni-channel service usage

Shen et al. (2018) stated that when customers perceive a fluent cross-channel experience, they will be more likely to increase their usage behaviour of omni-channel service.

1.3.3 Channel integration quality

Sousa & Voss (2006) stated that "Channel integration quality is defined as the ability to provide customers with a seamless and unified service experience across different channels".

1.3.3.1 Content consistency

Sousa & Voss (2006) stated that content consistency implies that customers can receive same responses through different channels.

1.3.3.2 Process consistency

Sousa & Voss (2006) & Sun et al. (2016) stated process consistency as the "similarity and consistency of relevant and comparable process attributes (e.g. service's feeling, image and performance) in different channels".

1.3.4 Object based beliefs

Shen et al., (2018) stated object-based belief is about technological features and functionalities.

1.3.4.1 Channel choice breadth

Cheung et al. (2015) & Shen et al. (2018) stated channel choice breadth refers to the "degree to which customers can freely access information and service from different channels for their needs satisfaction, which is often considered as an important cause for customer commitment and engagement".

1.3.4.2 Channel service transparency

Sousa & Voss (2006) & Wu et al. (2016) stated that channel service transparency describes customer's awareness of the existence of all available service channels, as well as their familiarity with service attributes of different channels.

1.3.5 Behaviour-based traits

Shen et al., (2018) stated behaviour based traits can be defined as the characteristics of an individual which consistently describe a person's behaviour.

1.3.5.1 Internal usage experience

Shen et al., (2018) stated internal usage experience as the extent to which users have experience about a specific IT.

1.3.5.2 External usage experience

Shen et al., (2018) stated external usage experience as the extent to which users have experience with other similar omni-channel services.

1.4 Interactive technologies in an Omni-channel environment

Mobile technology innovation, e.g., smart phones and other electronic devices, has enabled retailers to reach more consumers through both online and offline channels, thereby expanding their shares of the market (Brynjolfsson et al., 2013; Bell et al., 2014). According to Levitt (2013), in the Omni-channel approach the consumer has a holistic and customer-centric experience with the brand, as opposed to channel-based, where technology to enable a seamless experience for the customer also delivers useful data to retailers about customer needs and to optimize operations (Cho and Fiorito, 2010). Aubrey and Judge (2012) claim innovative technology enables retailers to optimize product availability, raise consumer engagement, enhance interaction with the brand, build brand image and enhance customer experience. Pantano & Di Pietro (2012) say the integration of technology can improve the customer's shopping experience.

1.5 Drivers and barriers of Omni-channel environment

Drivers are the motives for implementing the omni-channel strategy and barriers are the challenges in implementing the omni-channel strategy.

1.5.1 Drivers of Omni-channel retailing

Businesses can also further improve product offerings and services through interactions with consumers via multiple contact points and analyses of consumer behaviours observed at these contact points, hence creating a highly value-added and personalized shopping experience (Herhausen et al., 2015; Lewis et al., 2014). Omni-channel retailing also allows consumers to gain accurate information about product quality, price, and availability that helps them make better purchase decisions (Cao, 2014; Emrich et al., 2015).Complementary technologies, such as QR barcode, online payment system, social

media application and big data analytics, allow retailers to further develop a fast and user-friendly shopping experience for their consumers, thereby driving the trend of omni-channel retailing (Verhoef et al., 2015; Napolitano, 2013; Hagberg et al., 2016).

1.5.2 Barriers of Omni-channel retailing

Picot-Coupey et al. (2016) argue that the challenges of omni-channel adoption can be categorized into two main levels: strategy-related (e.g. organizational, cultural and managerial areas) and development-related (e.g. product mix, information systems (ISs) and customer relationship management areas) elements. Comparatively, Cao and Li (2015) specify omni-channel challenges with four different stages of integration (i.e. none, minimal, moderate and full). Both studies argue that strategic issues, such as alignment of fundamentals and transformation of organization, have to be dealt with at the full-integration level – a phase that innovations take place not only in marketing or IT department but also all parts of the organization with a completely customer-centric business goal.

1.6 Key performance indicators (KPIs) of Omni-channel retailing

KPIs are vital for retailers to check whether the omni-channel strategy fits their businesses, or which are the most effectively invested channels. In addition, without KPIs, misunderstanding can easily happen due to the complexity of customers' behaviour and the whole internal procedure. There are various KPIs like product returns, delivery and consistency etc. that must be highly focused for measuring the performance of Omni-channel brands.

According to survey conducted by "Total Retail, Radial a bpost company and NAPCO Media", various KPIs to measure Omni-channel brand's performance are BOPIS (Buy online, pick up in-store option, search in-store products online, return products across channels, channels for customer service and consistent pricing across all channels).

1.7 Rationale for the study

The emergence of technology and its adoption by consumers and retailers blurs the difference between online and offline shopping channel. Generations are moving into the era where both the channels have been integrated to create a seamless shopping experience. Now

customer can buy a garment from a store, or place an order at an online website using their laptop or mobile handset. They can choose to get their product delivered to home or pick up from a nearby store. They can also interact with sellers on social media and chat with their customer care staff through messenger on their websites. Due to this digitalization, customers are moving towards Omni-channel approach due to which retailers need to change their retail strategy. In order to generate more revenue and sales, retailers must follow Omni-channel strategy. However, in implementing this strategy, inventory visibility, customer expectation and centralized data management are the big challenges which retailers are facing.

Now-a-days, Indian retailers are increasingly adopting a multi-channel marketing strategy to increase their visibility and keep customers engaged. However, selling products through multiple channels is not the same as Omni-channel marketing, which is a more advanced concept that aims at providing a seamless experience of shopping to customers across channels and building a brand. This study will be beneficial for retailers as it will reveal the emerging interest of retailers towards Omni-channel approach and consumer attitude in using multiple channels simultaneously for their shopping behaviour. This will provide guidelines to the retailers about drivers and barriers of Omni-channel environment. This study will provide the role of interactive technologies in an Omni-channel environment which will in turn gives idea about the latest technologies which will be beneficial for Omni-channel retailing. With the help of this study, retailers will be able to understand the transformation from Multi-channel retailing to Omni-channel retailing.

1.8 Objectives of the study

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To explore the retailer's interest and consumer attitude towards Omni-channel approach
2. To study the consumer's intention to use interactive technologies in an Omni-channel environment
3. To identify the drivers and barriers for retailers in an Omni-channel environment
4. To evaluate the apparel brands based on the key performance indicators (KPIs) of Omni-channel retailing

1.9 Hypothesis of the study

H1: There is a positive relationship between retailer's interest and Omni-channel approach

H2: There is a positive relationship between perceived fluency and Omni-channel service usage

$H3_a$: There is a positive relationship between channel choice breadth and perceived fluency

$H3_b$: There is a positive relationship between channel service transparency and perceived fluency

$H3_c$: There is a positive relationship between content consistency and perceived fluency

$H3_d$: There is a positive relationship between process consistency and perceived fluency

$H3_e$: Internal usage experience weakens the effect of perceived fluency on Omni-channel service usage

$H3_f$: External usage experience enhances the effect of perceived fluency on Omni-channel service usage

H4: There is a positive relationship between consumer intention to use and interactive technologies

1.10 Limitations of the study

Following are some of the limitations of the present study:

1. The present study will be restricted to Delhi-NCR only.
2. Only Omni-channel retailers and consumers will be considered for sample.
3. This study will be limited to five categories mentioned below:
    - Multi-Brand
    - Single Brand
    - Sportswear Brand
    - Ethnicwear Brand
    - Luxury Brand

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review is a critical step in carrying out a research investigation. The main objective of this step is to understand the previous work that has been done in the subject and to find the unexplored aspect of the problem.

Omni-channel retailing is still at an evolving stage in India and few studies have been undertaken for studying the scenario of this concept in India. This study will focus on various factors which will be beneficial for retailers in implementing Omni-channel approach. A number of studies have been done in this field some of which are discussed below:

Ye, Lau and Teo (2018) explored two brands for identifying the drivers and barriers for Omni-channel retailing in China. They identified the formulation of business strategies by companies during their transformations to Omni-channel retailing. An exploratory case study approach was used to investigate the Omni channel retailing transformations of two well-established Chinese fashion apparel retailers which were CasualCo and LuxuryCo. In this study, primary data has been collected using interview technique from eight business executives in three major operational departments such as on-site observations in firm's retail stores, factories and distribution centers. Secondary data has been collected from firm business reports, news, whitepapers and archival records. The findings were established through a consistent within-case data analysis and cross-case comparison. Different strategies have been used by the two retailers in developing their Omni-channels, and exhibited different degrees of success. The similarities and differences in the drivers and barriers were analyzed and compared in this study. The findings revealed that there were three perspectives which were critical to the full implementation of Omni-channel retailing– marketing, logistics and supply chain, and organizational management. Both the companies investigated in this study use Omni-channel to expand their market share and enhance product promotion. Certain barriers, such as inability to leverage an integrated supply chain process across multiple channels to improve efficiency and loss of vision and leadership, were also found in both the cases. LuxuryCo focused not only on market share but also on customer service and product innovation in the transformation. However CasualCo focused on market share and

product promotion. Based on which, the company with successful transformation, LuxuryCo was able to leverage all the drivers and remove most of the barriers along the path to Omni-channel through proper planning whereas the less successful one CasualCo was in opposite situation faced many challenges in the Omni-channel transformation, including the lack of consistency in managing product lines and prices across channels as well as inability to develop a unified integrated system. This observation showed the importance of proper strategy formulation and operational planning in the success of Omni-channel adoption. Due to the exploratory nature of this study, this research categorized theoretical concepts into three business streams and used the same as main parameters. Researcher has not explored any technological driver and barrier of Omni-channel retailing.

Shen, Li, Sun and Wang (2018) examined the relationship between perceived fluency and Omni-channel service usage. They developed a research model in line with theoretical framework developed by Wixom & Todd which includes object based beliefs i.e. channel integration quality and behavioural beliefs i.e. perceived fluency. Channel integration quality includes two dimensions i.e. service configuration quality and integrated interaction quality and four variables i.e. channel choice breadth, channel service transparency, content consistency and process consistency. Perceived fluency includes five variables i.e. task, content, interaction, cognition and feeling fluency. An exploratory approach was used to investigate the potential drivers of Omni-channel service usage. Primary data has been collected by an online survey of 401 Omni-channel users through questionnaire. They have used seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) to identify the relationship between perceived fluency and Omni-channel service usage. Five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (no experience at all) and 5 (very experienced) has been used to identify the internal and external usage experience. The findings revealed that when customers perceive a fluent cross-channel experience in Omni-channel service, they will have a positive attitude and perceive reduced efforts for the channel transition, and thus will be more likely to further access and explore the Omni-channel services. However, internal usage (prior experience about the focal technology) experience weakens and external usage (prior experience about other similar technologies) enhances the effect of perceived fluency on Omni-channel service usage. Researcher has not examined the effect of perceived usefulness and ease-to-use on Omni-channel service usage.

Mosquera, Pascual, Ayensa and Murillo (2018) focussed on the consumer intention to use technology in an Omni-channel environment. Main objective of this study was to identify the intention to use different interactive technologies in a clothing store affects purchase intention and determine which technologies and practices consumers considered the most important in an Omni-channel clothing store and second, to test the moderating effect of gender on this relationship. A model has been developed with three hypotheses i.e. intention to use in-store technology, fitting room technology and own technology to conduct this study. Primary data has been collected through online survey from 628 Omni-channel customers of Zara brand as it allowed its customers to use different channels simultaneously during their purchase journey. 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree) has been used to measure the purchase intention. The moderating effects of gender were analysed by means of a multi-group comparison. They have followed two approaches to determine the significance of the differences between the estimated parameters for each group. Two parametric tests and one non parametric test have been used to analyse the differences between the models and to further assess possible moderating effects. The results showed that in case of men, in-store technology was the strongest predictor of purchase intention then own technology and fitting rooms. The most important reasons for using in-store technology for men were to get discounts, to look for an item or size not available at the store and to avoid carrying heavy bags. They were most likely to consider using fitting room technology to look for other sizes and colours and to look for clothes to complement their outfits. In contrast, for women, fitting room technology was the strongest predictor of purchase intention then in-store technology and own technology. Women said they would use in-store technology to have a larger assortment, look for an item or size not available at the store and get discounts. They were most likely to consider using fitting room technology to ask for advice without leaving the fitting room and to look for clothes to complement their outfits. Finally, they both have used their smartphones in the physical store primarily to compare prices and search for opinions about the products. The results of these two parametric tests and one non parametric test were similar and did not reveal significant differences between the groups. Thus, the moderating effect of gender was rejected in this study. Researcher has not examined the cost of technologies which might reduce the willingness of retailers to use that technology. Also, atmospheric and social factors were not considered in the study.

Marchet, Melacini, Perotti, Rasini and Tappia (2018) investigated how companies set the logistics variables in their Omni-channel management strategy and the most adopted business logistics models currently. A two-step methodology was adopted. A literature review has been done to derive a framework for classifying the key logistics variables and the related options then the framework was used to conduct a qualitative survey targeting 92 Italian companies operating in food manufacturing, food retailing and non-food retailing. Collected data were analysed by means of cluster analysis. The findings revealed that an Omni-channel management strategy implementation require setting of eleven logistics variables which were delivery mode, velocity, time slot, slot price differentiation, picking location, delivery area, transport service, automation, integration, order allocation and returns mode belonging to four strategic areas: delivery service, distribution setting, fulfilment strategy, returns management. An OC environment need to consider four main logistics variables relating to the delivery service: delivery mode, velocity, time slot and slot price differentiation. The distribution setting involves three basic logistics variables: picking location, delivery area and transport service. The classification framework of fulfilment strategy highlights three key logistics variables relating to automation, integration and order allocation. The logistics variable considered for returns management was returns mode. The cluster analysis has revealed four business logistics models currently adopted in different business sectors and characterised by different Omni-channel maturity which were separated model, integrated warehousing model, store-based model and multiple-configuration model. Results showed that separated model and integrated warehousing model were used by food manufacturers. However, store based model and multiple configuration model were used by food and non food retailers. Researcher has not evaluated the impact of contextual elements like marketing strategy and goods (e.g. value density) and e-commerce importance (e.g. volume) on business logistic model.

Wollenburg, Hubner, Kuhn and Holzapfel (2018) identified and analyzed the benefits of fulfillment enabled customer steering opportunities used by Omni-channel retailers. In this exploratory study, data was collected through face-to-face interviews with fashion retailers and focus customer groups and combined with additional market data from retailer's websites. The findings revealed that fulfillment process requires integrated solutions in the company structure, IT infrastructure and warehouse operations. Retailers can display cross-channel inventory availability, di□erentiate delivery and return options to steer customers

into a preferred channel. Joint corporate organization across all sales channels builds the foundation for seamless OC activities and was a pre-requisite for cross channel steering, creating mutual awareness of Omni-channel options between customer and retailer, creating cross-channel IT systems were pre-requisite for data transparency and enables transactions across channels. Hence, integrated IT builds the foundation for cross-channel fulfillment and creating warehouse operations structures and processes. Warehouses of OC retailers can be either separated by channel and location or integrated where inventory for the online channel and the store channel were consolidated. They identified three di□erent options to adjust warehouse operations allowing for order prioritization in integrated warehouses. Retailers can rearrange the picking list, use reserved time slots for picking, or they pick more frequently in smaller batches, allowing a more flexible scheduling. OC retailers need to promote not only a joint corporate organization but also create mutual awareness between customers (requirements) and retailers (o□ers). With cross-channel IT systems, fulfillment processes across channels were supported. They enable cross-channel inventory information. Moreover, adequate warehouse operations with priority and allocations rules were prerequisite for steering customers through the channels using a faster delivery process. All of the following steering options in the front-end fulfillment process require those essential back-end OC structures. By leveraging inventory information customers can be influenced in their channel choice and steered through the di□erent sales channels. This can be achieved by cross-channel inventory availability checks which display stock information to the customer and additional product or substitution recommendations. In order to enable customer steering by design choices in delivery, logistics processes have to be interconnected across channels. OC retailers o□er their customers home delivery and store pick-up of goods ordered online. While home delivery was associated with the online channel, store pick-up increases customer frequency at the outlets. Orders can be delivered free of charge or at a cost to a customers home or to a store for pick-up. It was possible to boost in-store pick-up by o□ering it for free and home delivery at a cost to the customer. The opposite steering direction was also possible by popularizing the online shop by o□ering free home delivery. Delivery can be made on the same day, on the next day, or on a later day to a customer's home or to a store for pick-up. Thus, even if retailers do not raise costs for home delivery and store pick-up, customers can still be steered towards a certain channel by adjusting the delivery velocity. One instrument for increasing delivery velocity was reducing the lead time for order provision. High velocity for home delivery can steer customers into the online channel. Reducing the return quota and ensuring fast and e□cient return processes were the main

objectives of the OC retailers. The return in store was usually free for customers, even though only a small percentage of retailers can incorporate the returned items into store inventory. Retailers discourage in-store returns of online purchases to steer customers to a return via LSP (Logistics service providers). This study has been conducted for large retailers only. Also, the cost for establishing and using the steering methods was not considered in the study.

Hübner, Kuhn, Wollenburg and Trautrims (2018) analyzed the internal logistics networks used to serve customers across channels by means of an exploratory study with retailers from different contexts. Primary data has been collected by interview of 12 companies from six European countries. The heterogeneity of the sample enabled the authors to build a typology of logistics networks in grocery retailing on multiple channels and to understand the advantages of different warehousing, picking, internal transportation and last-mile delivery systems. The findings revealed that Omni-channel retailers have di□erent options for grocery logistics. New warehouses such as solo pick-ups with warehouses have to be set up to fulfill the online channel in all types except for fulfillment of all online orders from store. The service level for online orders was higher in dedicated DCs than in online distribution center for home delivery orders, online distribution center for all online orders, hybrid of store and online distribution center for online order fulfillment and full integration of regional and online distribution center for all orders. Virtual shelf extension was possible in these cases as well. In-store picking such as in fulfillment of all online orders from store, pure pick-up of all online orders, online distribution center for home delivery orders and hybrid of store and online distribution center for online order fulfillment leads on average to shorter travel distances and transportation time for the last-mile home delivery. However, this goes along with higher overall picking costs due to two-stage picking and less e□cient in-store picking processes, availability issues within the stores, and lower capacity utilization of last-mile vehicles. Warehousing and picking in dedicated ODCs as applied in online distribution center for home delivery orders, online distribution center for all online orders and hybrid of store and online distribution center for online order fulfillment has the opposite consequences, where the higher picking e□ciency needs to compensate for aspects such as the higher investments in ODCs and longer distances to customers for home deliveries (online distribution center for home delivery orders, online distribution center for all

online orders and hybrid of store and online distribution center for online order fulfillment and full integration of regional and online distribution center for all orders). In types fulfillment of all online orders from store to hybrid of store and online distribution center for online order fulfillment, separate picking processes across the channels were either conducted in CPs for stores or in CUs for the online channel. This was di□erent in type full integration of regional and online distribution center for all orders, where small stores were supplied in CUs like online customers. This allows a combined picking and transportation procedure and leads to high picking e□ciency for CUs. Researcher has not explored challenges of warehousing operations in this study.

Lu (2017) developed and validated a TPE (Touch point based customer experience) model in today's omni-channel retailing environment. Seven touch points i.e. atmospheric, communicative, product, technological, process, employee-customer, customer-customer were examined. They examined the relationship between consumers' single touch point during decision making process and consumers' overall shopping experiences. Also, this study investigated the impact of consumers channel choice (single channel VS multichannel) on the proposed TPE model. This research investigated the role of RFM (Recency, Frequency and Monetary) on predicting omni-channel consumers' purchase probability for targeted promotions. Primary data was collected through questionnaire. 5-point Likert scale was used to measure the items. 329 respondents have been used to collect the responses. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to investigate the dimensionality of the Omni-channel customer experience. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was then conducted to examine the adequacy of the hypothesized measurement relationship of the proposed model. Result showed that atmospheric, product and process touchpoint experience positively influenced overall customer experience. Technological touch point and customer-customer touchpoint experience showed a non-significant influence on overall customer experience. Communicative touch point experience significantly influences overall customer experience for multi channel group, however, the influence vanishes when it comes to single channel group. Employ-customer touch point experience was found to positive influence overall customer experience for single channel consumers, but no such relationship was found for multi channel consumers. Researcher has not explored the relationship between retail drivers on consumer's expectation at different touch points as well as overall experience.

Hoehle, Aloysius, Chan and Venkatesh (2017) focused on the use of mobile technologies to facilitate customers' shopping in physical retail stores and associated implementation challenges. First, an exploratory study was used to better understand customers' reactions to the emerging shopping scenarios and developed a measurement scale. Second, they conducted an online survey to evaluate customers' tolerance for validation under the selected emerging mobile shopping scenarios which were Scenario A: mobile-assisted scanning and mobile-assisted payment, Scenario B: mobile self-service scanning with store device and fixed self-service payment, and Scenario C: mobile self-service sc. anning with smartphone and mobile self-service payment. They have introduced three additional self-service shopping scenario for comparison purpose (i.e. Scenario D, E and F). Scenarios D and E represent combinations of mobile/fixed and assisted/self-service scenarios, and Scenario F represent the traditional fixed self-service scenario. This study has been conducted among 239 customers. The authors proposed a construct labeled "tolerance for validation" defined as customer reactions to checkout procedures. The authors defined and discussed five dimensions – tolerance for: unfair process; changes in validation process; inconvenience; mistrust; and privacy intrusion. All items were measured using seven-point Likert scales ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 7 ("strongly agree"). Partial least squares (PLS) technique was used to assess the quality of the measurement scales. The findings revealed that customers have higher tolerance for validation under scenario in which mobile technologies were used in the checkout processes, as compared to the traditional self-service scenario in which no mobile technology was used. Results revealed that exit inspections do cause much inconvenience and customers understand the necessity of change in the form of exit inspections to prevent shop thefts and exit inspections were fair practices. Customers had higher tolerance for exit inspections when mobile technologies were used to facilitate the checkout processes. Results showed that customers were not yet ready for a full mobile self-service solution (using their own device) and may be less resistant to processes which feature human assistance during the checkout. Customers do not have a clear, strong preference for specific mobile shopping scenarios. Research has not explored technical problems related to the mobile technologies.

Saghiri, Wilding, Mena and Bourlakis (2017) developed a conceptual framework for Omni-channel systems, configured by three dimensions of channel stage, channel type and

channel agent. Integration and visibility were also explored and discussed as the main enablers, which support the implementation of Omni-channel framework. An exploratory research was done to investigate the concept, structure and performance of the Omni-channel. Multiple case studies and expert interview methods were employed for data collection to validate the recommended framework and to explore its applicability. Results revealed that integration among channel stages makes the customer's purchasing experience smooth, where all product or service providers were fully aware of what happens to the consumer in the earlier and later stages of the buying process. This integration allows consumers to move forward and backward across the channel stages without facing any confusion, losing control of their order, or finding any mismatch or inconsistency in the product, information or service they receive. Integration among channel types refers to synchronized operations and decisions among different channel types (e.g. online, offline, and mobile channels), while they should communicate and work together properly. This facilitates an easy switching from one channel type to another one for the consumer. Integration among channel agents ensures different channel agents send the same information and provide the same product and service to the consumer. Proper links among the integrated functions enhance the omni-channel system toward total integration, where promotion, pricing, product information, transaction, order fulfillment, customer service, and reverse logistics functions were fully coordinated throughout channel stages, types, and agents. Product, demand, order/payment, stock, shipment/delivery and supply visibility were the main enabler of Omni-channel system. Results showed that integration and visibility synergize each other toward enabling Omni-channel systems and their implementation. Researcher has not explored organizational behaviour, customer behaviour and financial management of the Omni-channel phenomenon.

Rajan, Swaminathan and Pavithra (2017) analyzed the factors which influence the purchase intent of the customer in Omni-channel buying. Focus group discussion was used for the exploratory research and quantitative research to arrive at and test the hypotheses. A survey method was used with a questionnaire instrument to measure price, product code, store inventory, item availability, location based promotions, product reviews, customer self-service and order status visibility. 164 respondents have been used to collect the responses. 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree) was used. Cronbach's alpha reliability test was used to measure the independent variables. Result revealed that only three components - Order Status

Visibility, Product Code and Location Based Promotions majorly affects the purchase intent. Researcher has not explored impact of delivery on purchase intent.

Hübner, Wollenburg and Holzapfel (2016) investigated development of separate multi-channel (MC) to integrated Omni-channel (OC) fulfillment. Data has been collected from 60 internationally active retailers and experts from Germany through exploratory survey. They have implemented a web-based survey which o□ers the opportunity to create an interview-like event and reaction to participants' answers. Multiple secondary sources, such as published interviews, reports and data provided by market research institutions and service firms were used as well. Data analysis has been done by in-depth evaluations. The findings revealed that there were seven development options for an advanced Omni-channel fulfillment approach which were inventory, picking, assortment, delivery, return, organization and IT systems. MC retailers have channel-separated inventories, whereas OC retailers manage integrated inventory in one warehousing solution. MC retailers pick separately by channel, while in the more developed OC phase, methods were applied for process improvements in cross-channel picking like picking in one zone. Retailers offer a limited set of SKUs online in a basic MC approach and advance towards a more extensive assortment online than offline in OC phase. In the MC approach, retailers exclusively offer postal delivery for distance orders, whereas in the OC model, the delivery options are expanded through process integration to include pick up services as well. At MC retailers, customers can only return online bought goods through the postal service. In an advanced OC concept, the return of goods was not coupled to the channel where it was bought. The MC model, where operations responsibility for the channels was separated, will ultimately transit towards a single, integrated OC logistics unit with cross-channel coordination. MC retailers have separate and channel-specific ERP systems, whereas advanced OC solutions were based on a joint, cross-channel ERP system with real-time access. This study has been conducted using multi commodity group. A single commodity group can be used for depth analysis. Researcher has not explored challenges of transforming into Omni-channel retailer from multi channel retailer.

Hübner, Kuhn and Wollenburg (2016) developed a planning framework for last mile order fulfillment in Omni-channel grocery retailing and discussed the advantages and disadvantages of different design concepts. Main objective of this paper was to identify the parameters of a strategic planning framework for last mile order fulfillment and delivery in Omni-channel grocery retailing and their interrelation. Secondary data has been collected by means of a literature review; available statistics in the respective fields from international sources and the offerings from the websites of grocery retailers such as annual reports and press releases. Primary data has been collected by eight semi-structured interviews with grocery retailers and experts from Europe. The findings were developed and evaluated by means of explorative interviews with grocery retail and logistics experts. The strategic planning framework developed based on explorative interviews consists of two major blocks: fulfillment and distribution. Fulfillment deals with all warehouse operations concepts, whereas distribution concentrates on last mile delivery options. The five pillars were picking and packing under fulfillment parameter and Delivery mode, time, area, returns under distribution parameter were independent of each other and were run through consecutively during the process of order fulfillment and delivery. Omni-channel logistics planning can be structured into back-end fulfillment (e.g. warehouse and in-store picking) and last mile distribution concepts (e.g. attended and unattended home delivery). The design choices depend on country specifics (e.g. population density), retailer specifics (e.g. capability for cross-channel process integration) and customer behavior (e.g. possibility of unattended home delivery). Researcher has not explored parameters related to inventory management.

Bernon, Cullen and Gorst (2016) identified the effect of Omni-channel retailing on product return rates at the product category level, the emergent physical network challenges and process challenges for Omni-channel retail returns. A mixed method approach was adopted i.e. a quantitative survey to analyze the effects of online retailing on product return levels and qualitative interviews to gain further insights and richness of understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Data collection was done in three stages which were Stage 1: Quantitative data collection of returns rates: to quantitatively measure the levels of product returns experienced from store-based and online based returns. Three categories of products were identified Clothing, Electrical / Technical and Home to conduct the study. Seven retailers took part in providing returns data. Data has

been collected through Excel spreadsheet, Stage 2: Exploratory qualitative research forum: To explore the thematic issues relating to the management of Omni-channel retail returns, a one day research workshop event was held with 4 retailers and 2 3PL organizations and Stage 3: Exploratory qualitative empirical work: Data collection was undertaken with 10 organizations through semi-structured interviews, site visits and direct observation, and analysis of secondary sources such as company websites, company documentation, company presentation media and external publically available data including, newspaper articles and practitioner documents. The findings revealed that retailers offered similar policies for both channels (online and offline). Return rates for online retailing were doubled than offline retailing, while return levels for "considered purchases" remain similar. Two new management aspects were relevant when considering physical network design for Omni-channel returns: Strategies relating to customer accessibility to return entry points and increasing complexity leading to issues of poor integration across the returns channels. They have found two unique process challenges when dealing with Omni-channel returns; Processing speed and Process integration. Researcher has not considered supply chain integration concerns of return management.

Ahmed and Kumar (2015) investigated a model for understanding the drivers and barriers for Omni-channel retail. They have tested the effect of various factors on Omni-channel retail. Convenience sampling technique and sample size of 96 supply chain professionals has been used to conduct the survey. Primary data has been collected through online questionnaire containing measure of drivers and barriers of Omni-channel retail. 7 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) was used to collect the responses. Partial Least Square (PLS) regression was used to test the research model. They have used three approaches i.e. Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE) to assess the model's internal consistency. Results revealed three type of drivers i.e. (1) Innovative sales and marketing opportunities, (2) Cross channel synergies and (3) Channel migration and three type of barriers i.e. (1) Integrated sales and marketing operations, (2) Visibility and synchronisation and (3) Integration and technology challenges. This study strongly supports that Omni-channel effects exist between cross channel synergy and channel migration. However, it partially supports innovative sales and marketing operations. Cross channel synergies positively influence the Omni-channel Retail. One of the most common synergy was the use of one channel to promote another. Leveraging

cross-channel information and marketing research from one channel to improve decision in other channels. In some cases, companies have established a presence in multiple channels to complement the pricing strategy of the other channels. When the same companies begin to sell online, direct to customer, the price they charge in this channel may help control the threat of double marginalization. Migration of consumers from single channel to multichannel positively influences the Omni-channel retail. Retailers must provide unique cross channel benefits and integrated distribution mode in order to have better customer relationship management. They have investigated that integration of technology across the platform was the main barrier of Omni-channel retail. Visibility and synchronization positively influences the Omni-channel retail wherein product, customer and inventory information were the main barriers of Omni-channel retail. Researcher has not explored drives and barriers related to organization management of Omni-channel retail.

Azhari and Bennett (2015) investigated the use of digital technology in physical stores, its impact on the consumer's decision making process and its effect on the customer shopping experience. This study has been conducted through survey using Computer aided personal interview. Sample population of this study was shoppers over the age of 18. A structured questionnaire has been prepared for the survey. Nominal scale, ordinal scale and Five-point Likert scale has been used to collect the responses. Various technologies were considered in this study. The findings revealed that shoppers use multiple information channels in physical stores before purchasing the product. 73% shoppers noticed video screens, 71% digital in-store displays and 65% free wi-fi in the physical stores. However, interactive technologies like kiosks, tablets and walls were not noticed very often. Results showed that retailer's interactive technology found it useful and convenient, functional and easy to use. In-store technologies were not the only medium to attract the customer and provide the better services. However, these technologies can be used to avoid sales staff interaction which sometimes difficult to handle. Few customers found these technologies enjoyable and fun. Researcher has not considered cost implications of these technologies which might reduce the willingness of retailers to install the technology.

METHODOLOGY

In the process of carrying out a research investigation, it is very important to follow a systematic scientific approach to present and interpret the results of the study. Different parameters used in investigation of the problem such as sampling frame, sample size, sampling technique, data collection and analysis tool will be considered in the study. The design of the study will be based on the following parameters:

- Research Design
- Research process
- Locale of the study
- Sampling Procedure
- Tools and technique of data collection
- Statistical analysis of data

Research Design: In order to achieve the objectives of the study, descriptive research design will be used for research work. Survey method will be used to collect the data. Survey will be done through interview schedule to obtain the required information from the customers and retailers. This study will be carried out in four stages for smooth execution of research work.

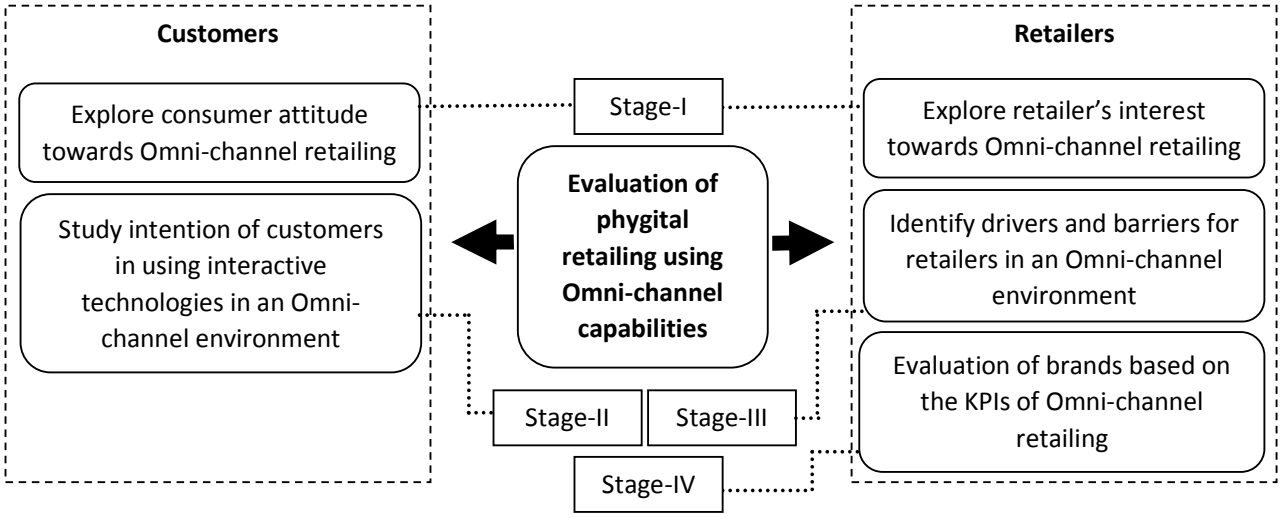
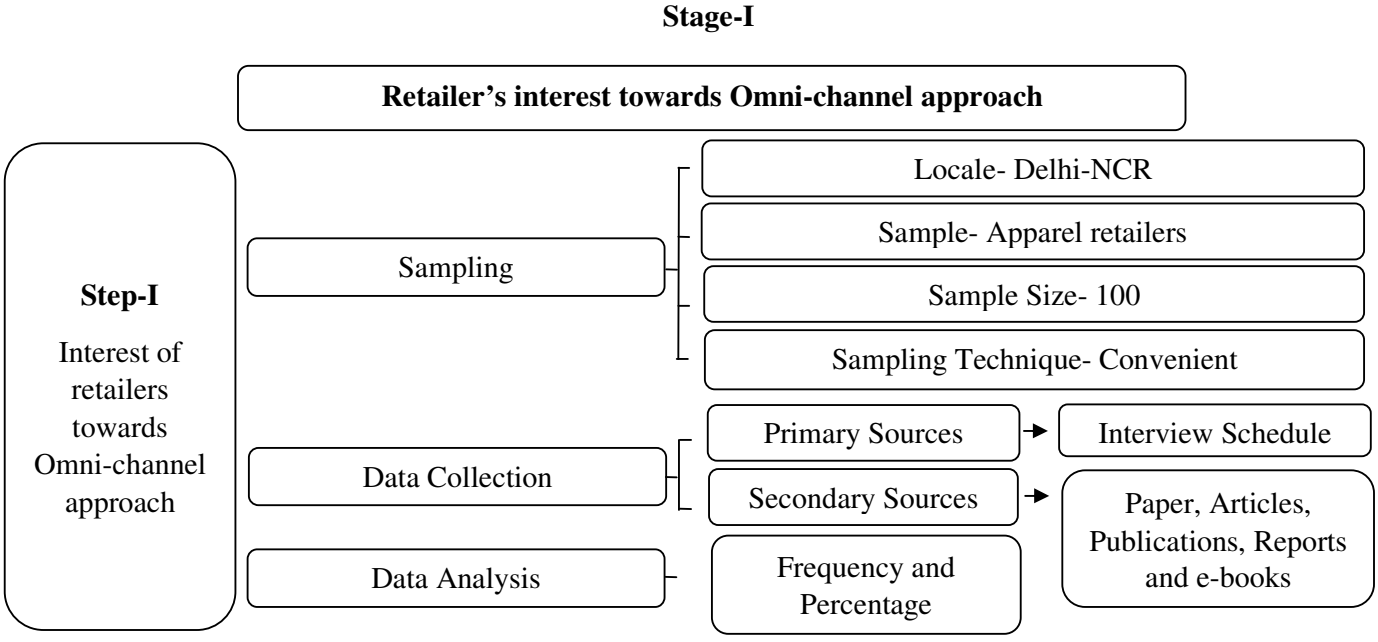

Customers
Explore consumer attitude towards Omni-channel retailing
Study intention of customers in using interactive technologies in an Omni-channel environment
Stage-I
Evaluation of phygital retailing using Omni-channel capabilities
Stage-II
Stage-III
Stage-IV
Retailers
Explore retailer's interest towards Omni-channel retailing
Identify drivers and barriers for retailers in an Omni-channel environment
Evaluation of brands based on the KPIs of Omni-channel retailing

Figure 3.1: **Conceptual Framework**



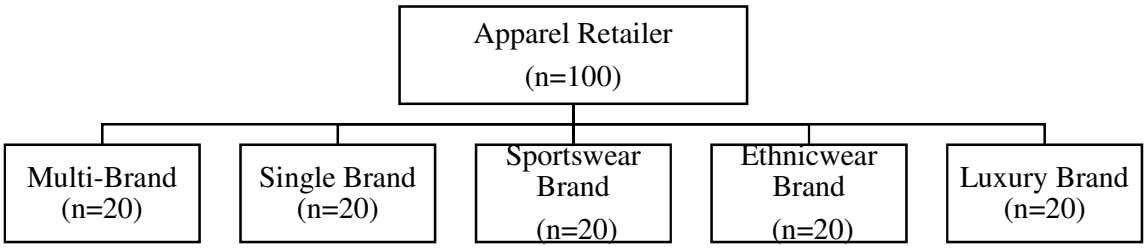
3.1 Locale of the study:

The locale of the study will be Delhi-NCR.

3.1.1 Sampling Procedure:

Selection of the sample:

- Sample: Apparel retailers will be approached to conduct the survey. Only those respondents will be approached who are using or has an idea of Omni-channel strategy.
- Sample Size: A total of 100 respondents will be approached for this survey. This part will be conducted for different categories- Multi-Brand, Single Brand, Luxury Brand, Sportswear Brand and Ethnicwear Brand. Only those brands in each category will be approached who are offering more than one channel for shopping. Twenty brands of each category will be identified to conduct the survey.



- Sampling technique: Convenient sampling technique will be used to collect the data regarding interest of retailers towards Omni-channel approach. Retailers who will be willing to respond and impart the required information will be approached.

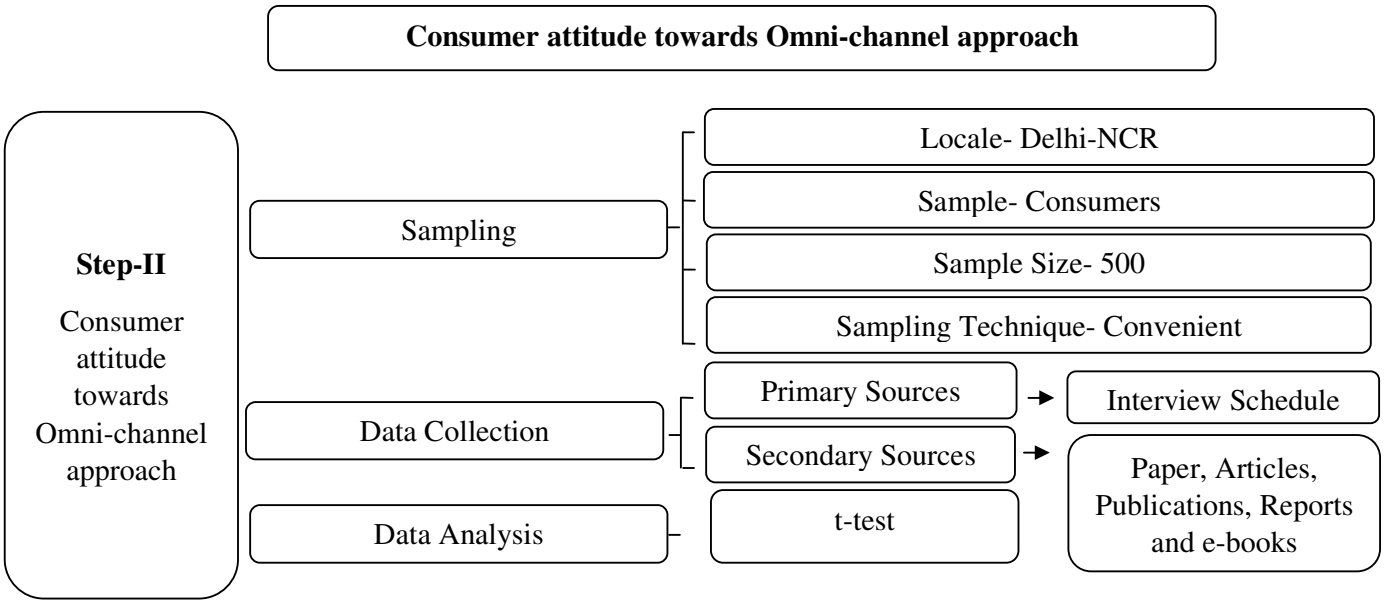
3.1.2 Tools and technique of data collection:

Data will be collected from both the sources- primary and secondary.

- Primary data: Data will be collected through interview schedule.

3.1.3 Statistical analysis of data:

The collected data will be coded, tabulated and analysed using frequency and percentage.



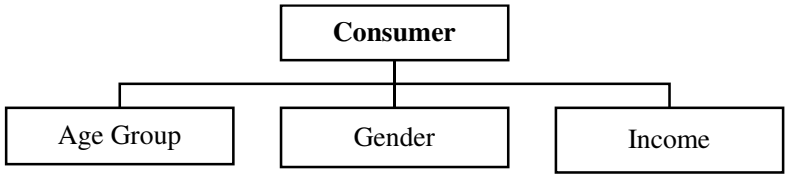
3.2 Locale of the study:

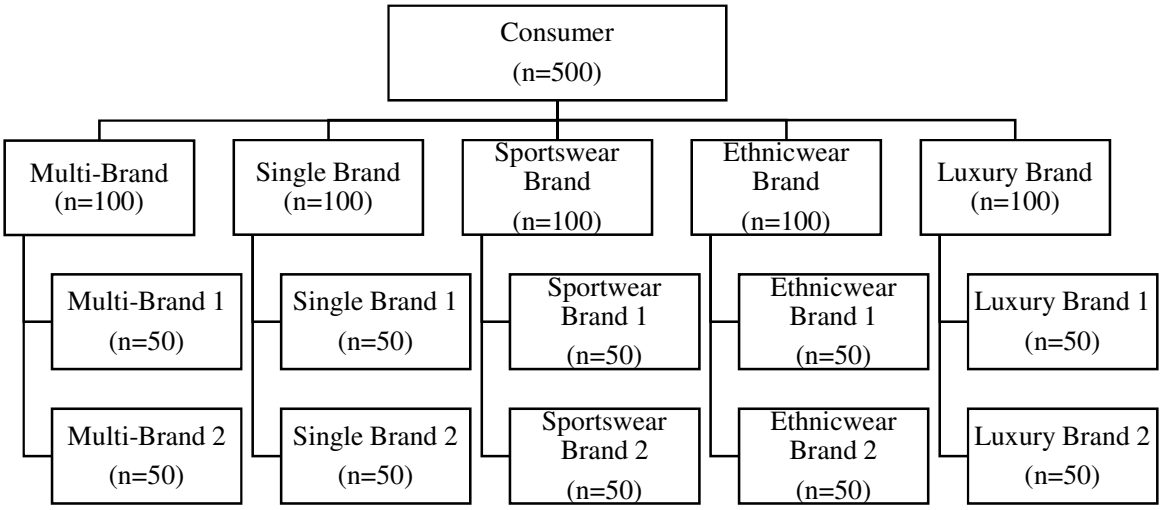
The locale of the study will be Delhi-NCR.

3.2.1 Sampling Procedure:

Selection of the sample:

- Sample: Consumers of each identified brand will be approached to conduct the survey.
- Sample Size: A total of 500 respondents will be approached for this survey. Respondents will be categorised under three parameters- Age group, gender and income. This part will be conducted for different categories- Multi Brand, Single Brand, Luxury Brand, Sportswear Brand and Ethnicwear Brand. Only those brands in each category will be approached who are offering more than one channel for shopping. Two brands of each category will be identified to conduct the survey.





- Sampling technique: Convenient sampling technique will be used to collect the data regarding consumer attitude towards Omni-channel approach. Consumers who will be willing to respond and impart the required information will be approached.

3.2.2 Tools and technique of data collection:

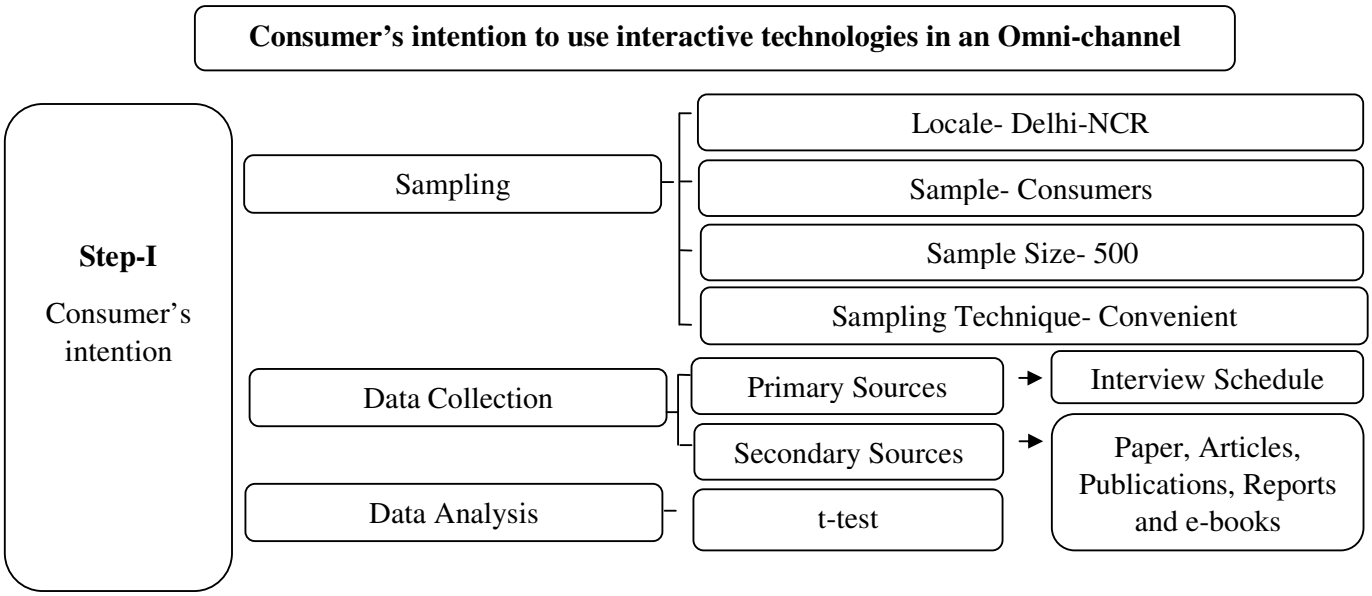
Data will be collected from both the sources- primary and secondary.

Primary data: Research model developed by Shen, Li, Sun and Wang (2018) will be used in this study. Data related to the required parameters of the research model will be collected through interview schedule.

3.2.3 Statistical analysis of data:

The collected data will be coded, tabulated and analysed using t-test. Data will be analysed on the basis of the 3 parameters. Researcher will identify the relation of consumer attitude of different age group, gender and income with Omni-channel approach.

Stage-II



3.3 Locale of the study:

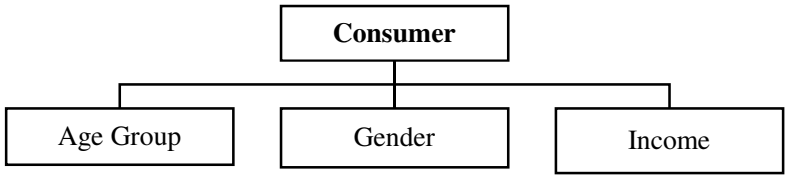
The locale of the study will be Delhi-NCR.

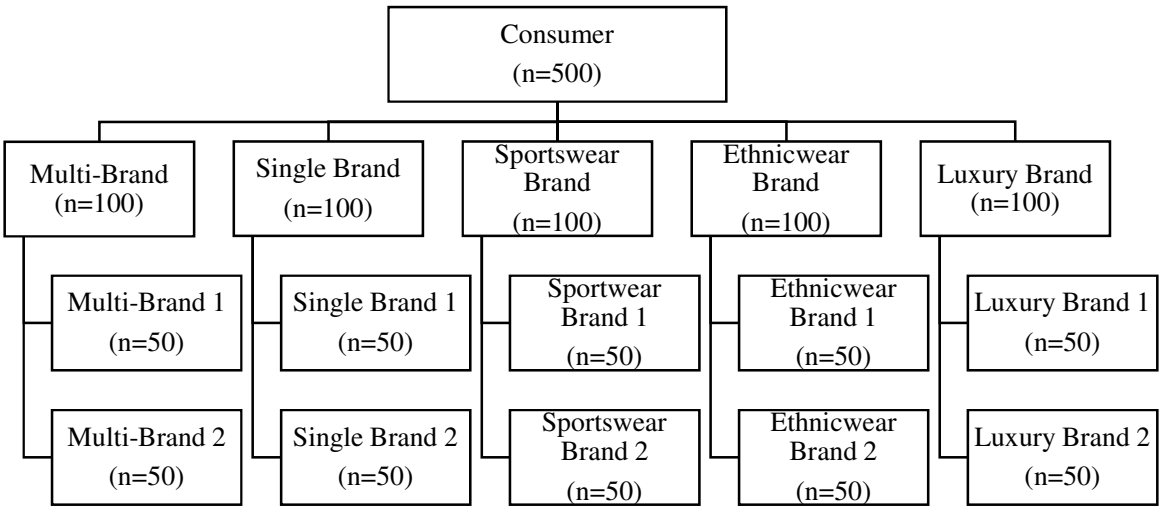
3.3.1 Sampling Procedure:

Selection of Sample:

- Sample: Consumers of each identified brand will be approached to conduct the survey.
- Sample Size: A total of 500 respondents will be approached for this survey.

  Respondents will be categorised under three parameters- Age group, gender and income. This part will be conducted for different categories- Multi Brand, Single Brand, Luxury Brand, Sportswear Brand and Ethnicwear Brand. Only those brands in each category will be approached who are using different interactive technologies like Mobile POS, Tablets, In-store Wi-Fi and RFID etc. Two brands of each category will be identified to conduct the survey.





- Sampling technique: Convenient sampling technique will be used to collect the data regarding intention of consumers in using technologies in an Omni-channel environment. Consumers who will be willing to respond and impart the required information will be approached.

3.3.2 Tools and technique of data collection:

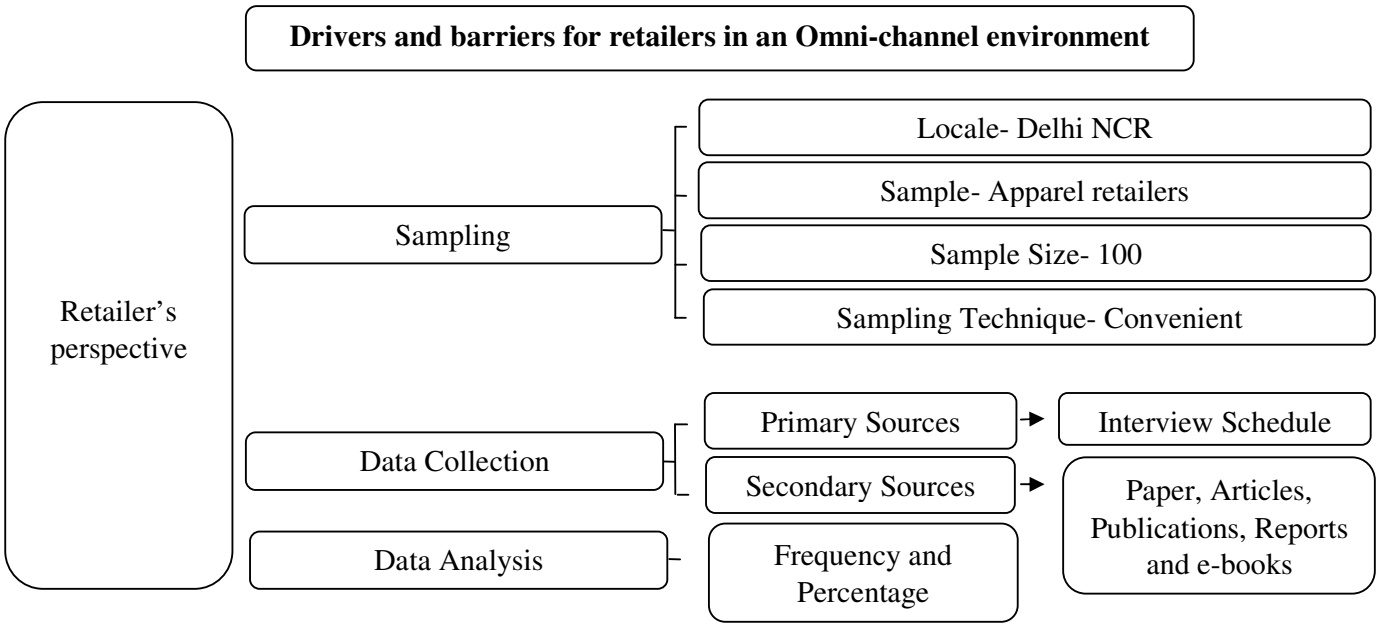
Data will be collected from both the sources- primary and secondary.

Primary data: Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) developed by Davis (1989) will be used in this study. Data will be collected through interview schedule which will include questions related to attitude towards technology, behavioural intention to use, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness.

3.3.3 Statistical analysis of data:

The collected data will be coded, tabulated and analysed using t-test. Data will be analysed on the basis of the 3 parameters. Researcher will identify the relation of age group, gender and income with intention to use interactive technology in an Omni-channel environment.

Stage-III



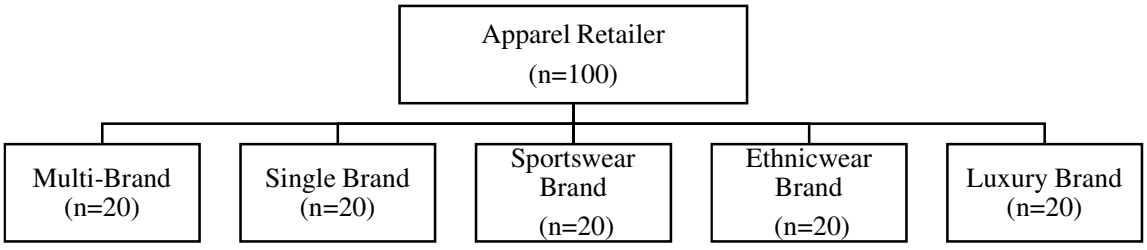
3.4 Locale of the study:

The locale of the study will be Delhi-NCR.

3.4.1 Sampling Procedure:

Selection of the sample:

- Sample: Apparel retailers will be approached to conduct the survey. Only those respondents will be approached who are using or has an idea of Omni-channel strategy.
- Sample Size: A total of 100 respondents will be approached for this survey. This part will be conducted for different categories- Multi-Brand, Single Brand, Luxury Brand, Sportswear Brand and Ethnicwear Brand. Only those brands in each category will be approached who are offering more than one channel for shopping. Twenty brands of each category will be identified to conduct the survey.



- Sampling technique: Convenient sampling technique will be used to collect the data regarding drivers and barriers of retailers in an Omni-channel environment. Retailers who will be willing to respond and impart the required information will be approached.

3.4.2 Tools and technique of data collection:

Data will be collected from both the sources- primary and secondary.

- Primary data: Data will be collected through interview schedule.

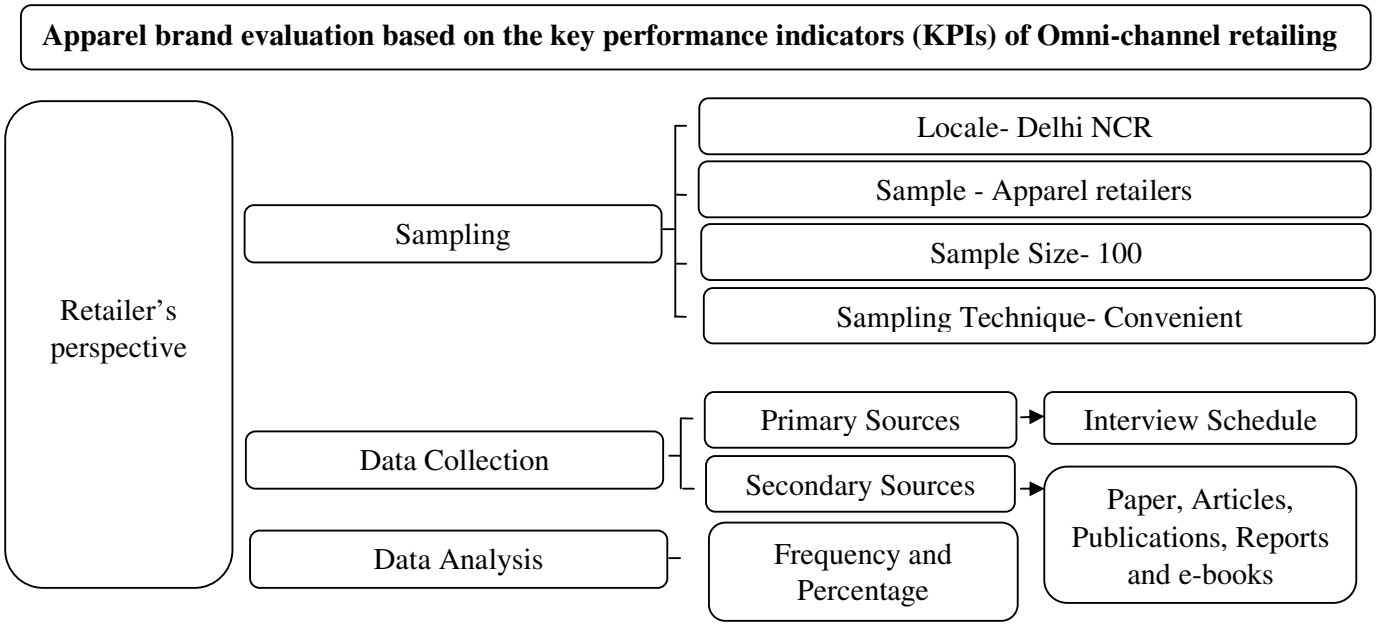
3.4.3 Statistical analysis of data:

The collected data will be coded, tabulated and analysed using frequency and percentage.

3.4.4 To create guidelines for retailers in implementing Omni-channel strategy

The researcher will identify the drivers and barriers while synchronizing online channel with offline channels in an Omni-channel perspective. The researcher will prepare various guidelines for the retailers on the basis of which they can make better decisions during implementation of Omni-channel strategy.

Stage-IV



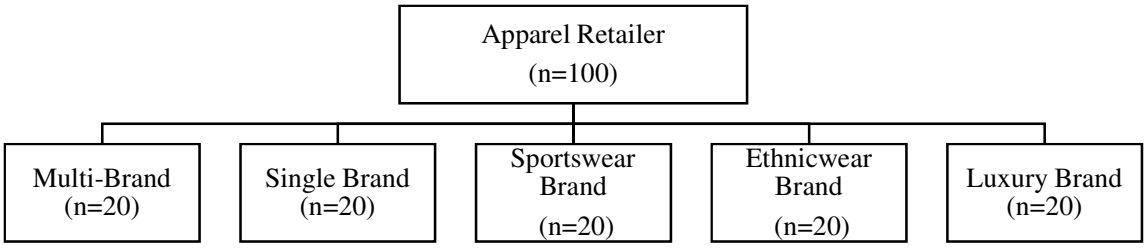
3.5 Locale of the study:

The locale of the study will be Delhi-NCR.

3.5.1 Sampling Procedure:

Selection of the sample:

- Sample: Apparel retailers will be approached to conduct the survey. Only those respondents will be approached who are using or has an idea of Omni-channel strategy.
- Sample Size: A total of 100 respondents will be approached for this survey. This part will be conducted for different categories- Multi-Brand, Single Brand, Luxury Brand, Sportswear Brand and Ethnicwear Brand. Only those brands in each category will be approached who are offering more than one channel for shopping. Twenty brands of each category will be identified to conduct the survey.



- Sampling technique: Convenient sampling technique will be used to collect the data regarding interest of retailers towards Omni-channel approach. Retailers who will be willing to respond and impart the required information will be approached.

3.5.2 Tools and technique of data collection:

Data will be collected from both the sources- primary and secondary.

- Primary data: Data will be collected through interview schedule. Scoring pattern will be used for evaluation purpose.

3.5.3 Statistical analysis of data:

The collected data will be coded, tabulated and analysed using frequency and percentage.

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APPENDICES

Interest of retailer's towards Omni-channel approach

(Stage I- Interview Schedule)

Q1. Which channels do you currently use? (Tick all that apply)

- Brick and mortar store
- Online- company web site
- Online- social commerce site
- Online- subscription commerce
- Mobile web site
- Mobile app
- Catalog
- Wholesaler/Distributor
- E-commerce marketplace

Q2. Which of the following channels increased in annual revenue, decreased or stayed the same?

Channel	**Increased 1-20%**	**Increased > 20%**	**Decreased or Flat**
Brick and mortar store			
Online- company web site			
Online- social commerce site			

Online- subscription commerce			
Mobile web site			
Mobile app			
Catalog			
Wholesaler/Distributor			
E-commerce marketplace			

Q3. What are the most important business objectives/goals of your company's Omni-channel strategy? (Tick all that apply)

- Creating a seamless customer experience across all channels
- Optimizing inventory investments
- Localizing assortments/services
- Acquiring new customers
- Improving customer retention
- Reacting more quickly to business/market changes

Q4. What are the most valuable ways your Omni-channel strategies have improved your business? (Choose the top four)

- Improved loyalty
- Increased customer engagement with brand
- Increased basket size
- Improved supply chain efficiency
- Helped to revamp in-store merchandising
- Improved inventory efficiency
- Improved customer service
- Improved marketing effectiveness
- Improved customer retention
- Improved employee satisfaction/retention

Q5. How important are these components of your Omni-channel brand strategy?

Components	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	N/A (Don't have)
Product availability information across the channels					
Consistent pricing across channels					
Personalized offers/communications					
Product reviews					
Loyalty Program					
Cross-channel inventory visibility					
Mobile payment					
Digital in-store technology					
Last Mile: Ordering/Delivery options (BOPIS etc.)					
Free shipping					
Location based promotions					
Order status visibility					
View of in-store inventory online					

Q6. What types of analytics do you currently use to evaluate and optimize your Omni-channel strategies? (Tick all that apply)

- Customer analytics
- Sales analytics
- Web analytics
- Marketing analytics
- Mobile analytics
- Social media analytics
- Merchandising analytics
- Assortment/inventory analytics
- Supply chain analytics
- Predictive analytics
- Location based analytics

Q7. Which of the following have been your major priorities for Omni-channel strategy?

- Correct usage of channels, e.g. via apps, click & collect, in-store pickup, chatbots, QR-codes, beacons, virtual fitting rooms, etc.
- Definition of a comprehensive customer journey across all relevant channels
- Linking of different channels to facilitate cross-selling
- Coordination of distinct channels towards a consistent customer experience
- Harmonization of pricing between different channels

Q8**.** Which of the following order/pickup/delivery options do you currently offer? (Tick all that apply)

- Buy online/pick up in-store
- Buy via in-store kiosk/deliver to store or home
- Buy in-store through store associate/ deliver to store or home
- Buy via mobile site or app/ pick up in-store
- Buy via mobile site or app/ deliver to home
- Reserve online/ purchase and pick up in-store
- Same-day delivery

Q9. What tools or solutions are you using to track consumer activity across the Omni-channel purchase journey? (Tick all that apply)

- Loyalty program
- CRM solution
- E-commerce site login/access
- Email communications
- In-store POS
- Cross-channel, multi-device customer tracking
- Location based technology/ Geographic information system
- Customer surveys
- Branded mobile app
- Social media tracking
- Virtual assistants
- Unified commerce solution
- N/A, we do not map the customer journey across channels

Q10. What types of cross-channel access to information is available to customers? (Tick all that apply)

- Customers can track orders across some or all channels
- Customers can access inventory data on personal devices and place/ modify orders
- Customers can access their loyalty information across some or all channels
- Customers can access promotions and offers across some or all channels
- Customers can share purchase and product information with their social networks from their personal devices
- N/A, we are not providing cross-channel information to shoppers across channels

Q11. What information is available to store associates to help them assist customers? (Tick all that apply)

- Basic product data
- Detailed product data including rich media (e.g. how to-videos)
- Pricing and promotion data
- Real-time product inventory levels
- Endless aisle options
- Multiple fulfilment options (e.g. customer pickup at another store)
- Previous customer purchases
- Customer loyalty program/CRM data
- Personalized upsell/cross-sell suggestions
- Customer intent data
- Cross-channel customer behaviour data

Consumer attitude towards Omni-channel retailing

(Stage I- Interview Schedule)

Channel service transparency							
Factor	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
CST1: I am aware of the existence of all available service channels							
CST2: I am aware of the differences between service attributes across different channels							
CST3: I know how to utilize different channels to meet my consumption needs							
Channel choice breadth							
CCB1: I can choose alternative channels for a given service							
CCB2: I can accomplish preferred tasks through individual channels							
CCB3: Regardless of the channel I choose, I can use other channels to get information or help							
Content Consistency							
CC1: I receive the same response through different channels							
CC2: When I interact with one channel, my interactions with other channels are always taken into account							
CC3: The information is consistent across different channels							
Process Consistency							
PC1: The service feelings are consistent across different							

channels							
PC2: The service images are consistent across different channels							
PC3: The service performance is consistent across different channels							
Task Fluency							
TF1: I can migrate the tasks smoothly across different channels							
TF2: I can carry on the tasks smoothly from one channel to another							
TF3: Omni-channel service allows for fluently continuing on the task across different channels							
Content Fluency							
CNF1: Omni-channel service supports my continuity of reading the service contents after my channel transition							
CNF2: Omni-channel service supports my continuity of exploring the service contents after my channel transition							
CNF3: After switching from one channel to another, I can easily find the recent read contents							
Interaction Fluency							
IF1: My interactions with the service across different channels are continuous and interconnected							
IF2: There is no need for me to explicitly think about the channels when I am interacting with the service							
Cognition Fluency							
CGF1: After channels transition, my engagement with the service remains the same							
CGF2: After channels transition, I can deal with the service correctly							
Feeling Fluency							
FF1: After channels transition, I have the same level of feeling toward the service							
FF2: After channels transition, I like the service as well in							

comparison to the previous channel							
Omni-channel service usage							
OSU1: I frequently access the Omni-channel service							
OSU2: I have used most available channels when dealing with the Omni-channel service							
OSU3: Most of my interactions with the service are promoted through the Omni-channel							

Evaluation of brands according to the KPIs of Omni-channel retailing

(Stage IV- Interview Schedule)

1.	**Channels**					
Category	Brand	Five or more channels (5 points)	Four channels (4 points)	Three channels (3 points)	Two channels (2 points)	One channel (1 point)
Multi-brand Outlet	Shoppers Stop					
	Lifestyle					
Single brand	Bestseller					
	Madura					
Sportswear	Adidas					
	Puma					
Ethnic wear	Fabindia					
	W/ Biba					
Luxury Brand	Burberry					
	Armani Exchange					

2.	**Consistent pricing across all channels**					
Category	Brand	Prices for all four items checked matches offline and online (5 points)	Prices for three of the four items checked matches offline and online (4 points)	Prices for two of the four items checked matches offline and online (3 points)	Prices for one of the four items checked matches offline and online (2 points)	None of the prices for the four items checked matches offline and online (1 point)
Multi-brand Outlet	Shoppers Stop					
	Lifestyle					
Single brand	Bestseller					
	Madura					
Sportswear	Adidas					
	Puma					
Ethnic wear	Fabindia					
	W/Biba					
Luxury Brand	Burberry					
	Armani Exchange					

3.	**Product returns**					
Category	Brand	Any item can be returned via mail or in-store regardless of purchase source (5 points)	Online items can go back via mail or in-store (4 points)	In-store purchases must be returned in-store (3 points)	All items must be returned in the channel in which they were purchased (2 points)	None of the items can be returned (1 point)
Multi-brand Outlet	Shoppers Stop					
	Lifestyle					
Single brand	Bestseller					
	Madura					
Sportswear	Adidas					
	Puma					
Ethnic wear	Fabindia					
	W/Biba					
Luxury Brand	Burberry					
	Armani Exchange					

4.	**Loyalty points earn and redeem**					
Category	Brand	Can be earned and redeemed both in-store and online (5 points)	Can be earned across both channels but only redeemed in one, or can be redeemed across both channels but only earned in one (4 points)	Can only be earned and redeemed in one channel (3 points)	Only credit card rewards program (2 points)	No loyalty program (1 point)
Multi-brand Outlet	Shoppers Stop					
	Lifestyle					
Single brand	Bestseller					
	Madura					
	Adidas					

Sportswear	Puma					
Ethnic wear	Fabindia					
	W/Biba					
Luxury Brand	Burberry					
	Armani Exchange					

5.	**Search in-store products online**					
Category	Brand	Can search/filter by store stock by product category and item (5 points)	Some product categories can be searched, others can be searched only by item (4 points)	Can search by store stock by item, not by category (3 points)	Can search by store stock by item only for certain items (2 points)	Cannot search for in-store products online (1 point)
Multi-brand Outlet	Shoppers Stop					
	Lifestyle					
Single brand	Bestseller					
	Madura					
Sportswear	Adidas					
	Puma					
Ethnic wear	Fabindia					
	W/Biba					

Luxury Brand	Burberry					
	Armani Exchange					

6.	**Buy online, pick up in-store**					
Category	Brand	Can buy online, pick up in-store and has ship-to-store (at all company stores) (5 points)	Available for most items at most stores, but doesn't necessarily ship to store (4 points)	Only in-stock items (no ship-to-store) (3 points)	Only certain items when in stock (doesn't allow for some items that may also be in stock, and not at all store locations) (2 points)	Cannot buy online, pick up in-store (1 point)
Multi-brand Outlet	Pantaloons					
	Lifestyle					
	Reliance Trends					
	Westside					
	Shoppers Stop					

Single brand	Bestseller					
	Madura					
Sportswear	Adidas					
	Puma					
Ethnic wear	Fabindia					
	W/Biba					
Luxury Brand	Burberry					
	Armani Exchange					